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MARVEL COMICS

X-CUTIONER'S SONG

PART 6

X-FACTOR

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30TH ANNIVERSARY
1962 1992

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

BEYOND VIDEO... THE *NEW* Dragon Quest GAME!

THIS IS CERTAINLY A SITUATION THAT'S RIFE WITH POSSIBILITIES.

I DON'T IMAGINE THAT ONE OF THOSE POSSIBILITIES IS THAT YOU GIVE ME FIVE MINUTES ALONE IN THIS FILE ROOM, AND THEN PERMIT ME TO GO ON MY WAY UNMOLESTED...

...PERHAPS?

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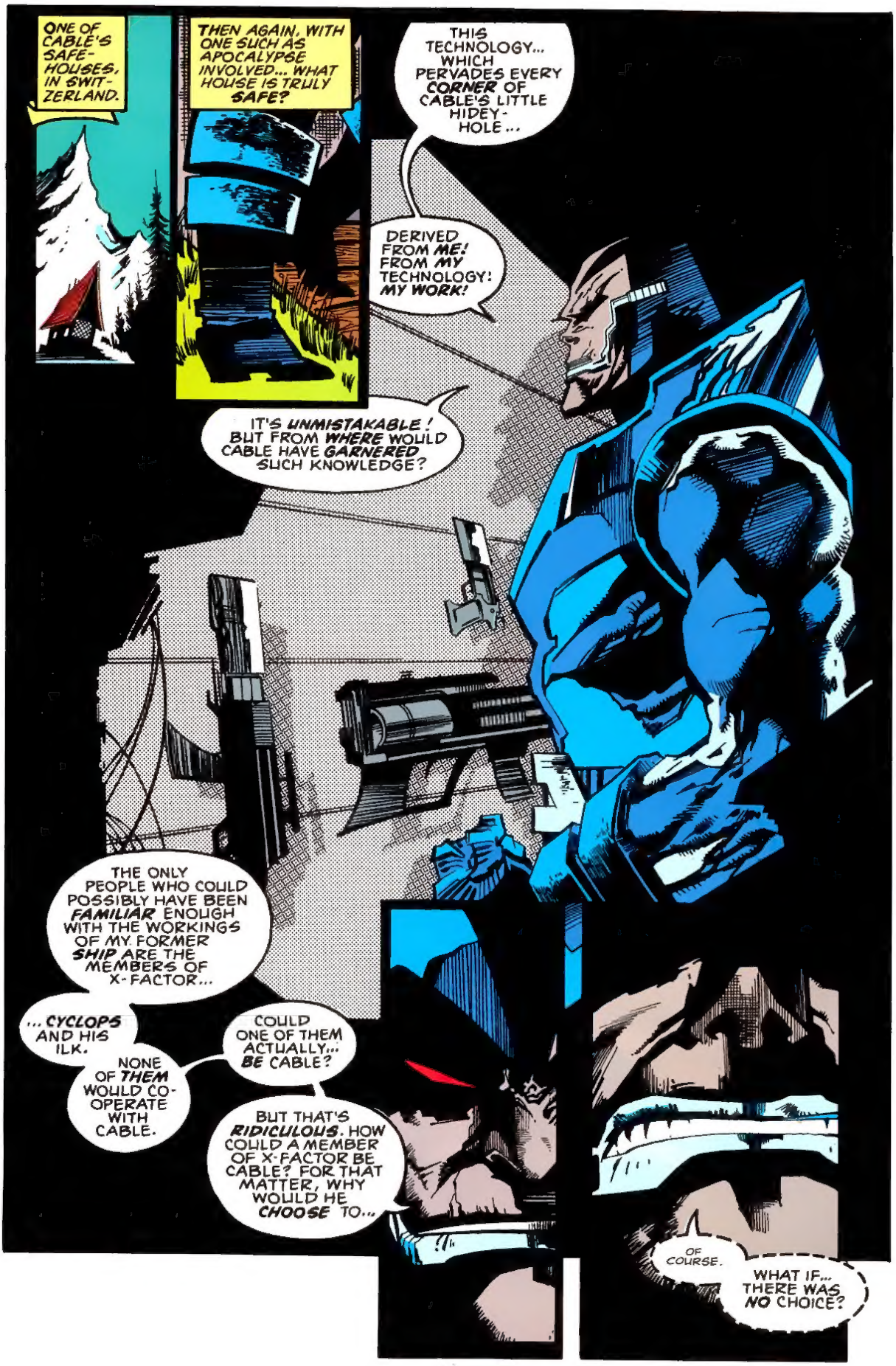
APOCALYPSE ESCAPED FROM A BATTLE WITH THE X-MEN. VAL COOPER DISCOVERED THAT STRYFE MAY BE THE MASTERMIND BEHIND IT ALL. CANNONBALL ACCEPTED AN OFFER OF ALLIANCE. WOLVERINE AND BISHOP JOURNEYED TO DEPT. X TO FIND CABLE WAITING FOR THEM.
X-CUTIONER'S SONG
CONTINUES!
MURDERER!
BUCHOOM
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
SNIKTS AND BONES
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A "NO."
UNNH
YOU AIN'T GONNA TAKE ME DOWN BY TOSSING A FILE CABINET.
NO MORE MESSIN' AROUND, CABLE! I WANT ANSWERS!
IT WAS WORTH A TRY, LOGAN.
OOOOF FF!
I ONLY NEED YOUR MOUTH INTACT FOR THAT.
SO THE NUMBER OF LIMBS YOU'LL KEEP WHILE YOU GIVE ME THOSE ANSWERS...
...IS STRICTLY UP TO YOU!

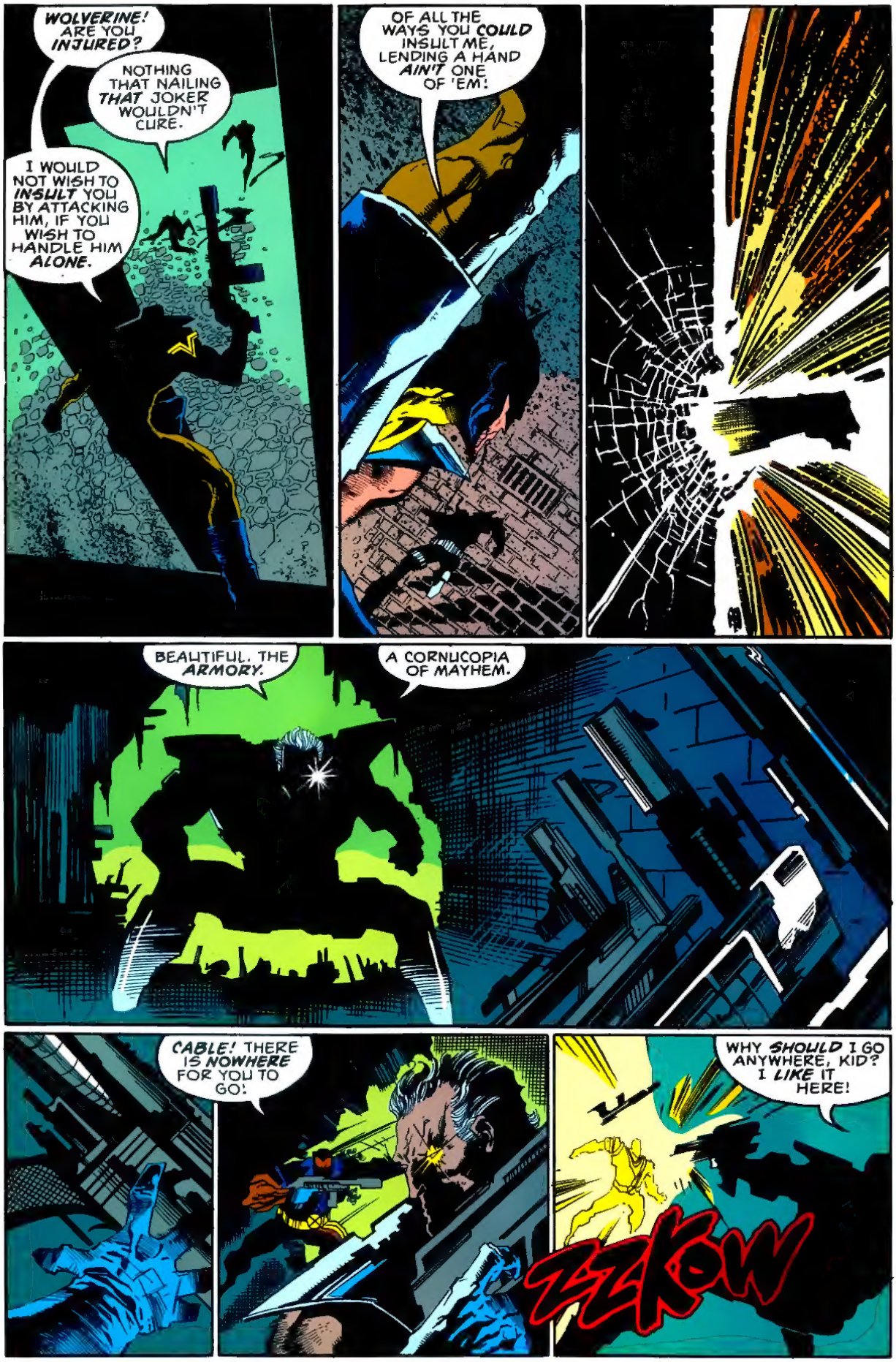
DUST BOWL, ARKANSAS...
'SCUSE ME? 'SCUSE ME? THANKS. 'PRECIATE IT.
I STILL DO NOT LIKE THIS... THIS OPEN APPROACH, HAVOK.
BEING OVERT THROWS OFF PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPECTING COVERT, STORM. JUST TRUST ME ON THIS.
'SCUSE ME, Y'ALL. MY NAME'S CANNONBALL... AND WE HERE ARE REPRESENTING THREE MUTANT GROUPS.
NOW, ALL OUR REFERENCIN', BASED ON PAST BATTLES COMBINED WITH GOVERNMENT DATA BASES... INDICATES THAT THE MUTANT LIBERATION FRONT HAS THEIR MAIN HANGOUT HEREABOUTS.
FURTHER, WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY AND THEIR LEADER, STRYFE, ATTEMPTED TO BLOW AWAY CHARLES XAVIER.
SO I'D LIKE TO KNOW IF Y'ALL HAVE SEEN THE MLF ANYWHERE AROUND?
ALLLLEXXX!
HOW ABOUT THAT? AFTER NINE POSSIBLE TOWNS, FINALLY WE GOT A NIBBLE.
ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE ALL UNDER ARREST!

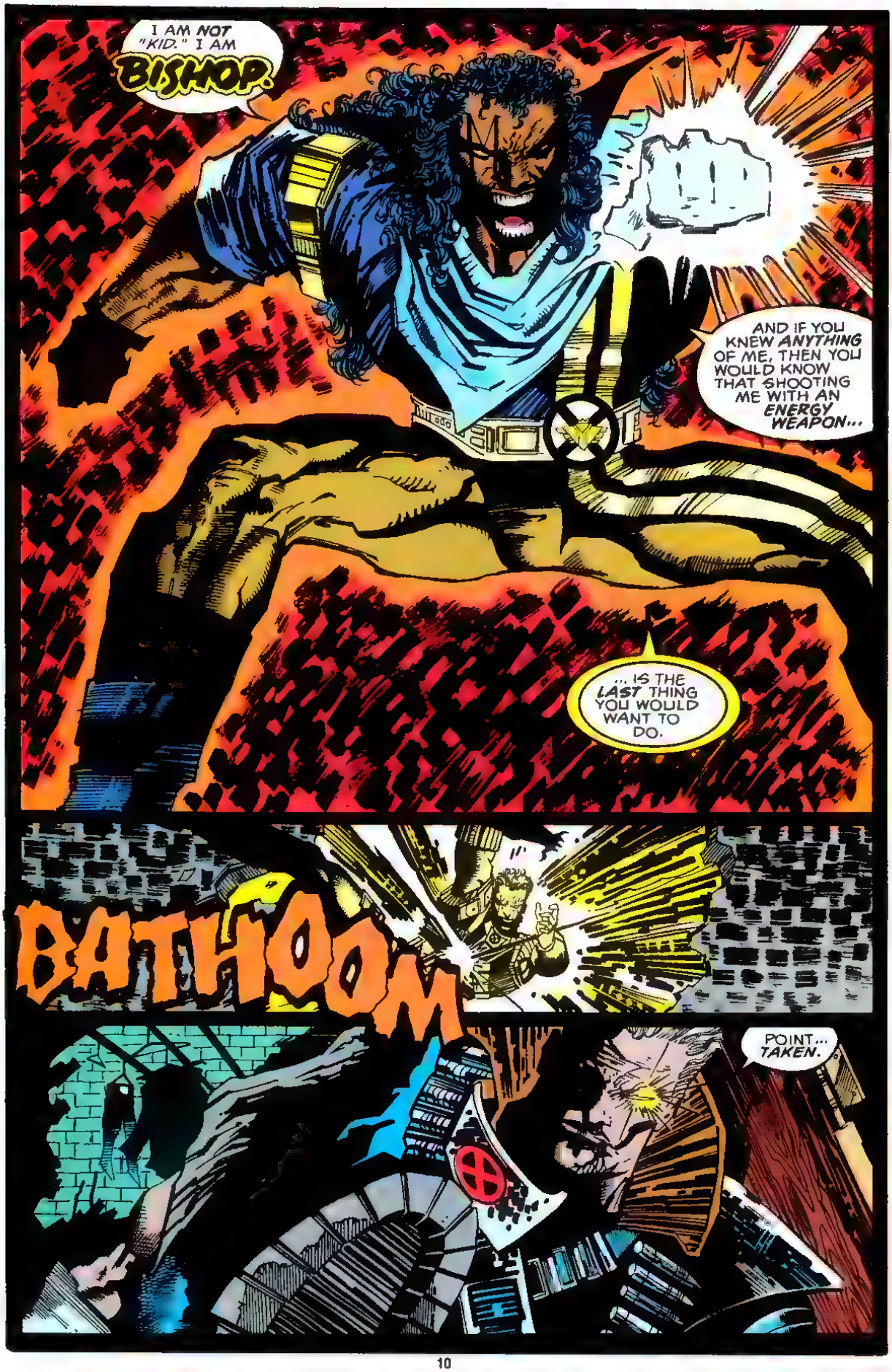
Oh YEAH YOU AND WHAT ARMY?
HEY!
NICE MAGNETIC SNAG, POLARIS. WE HIT PAYDIRT, ALL RIGHT.
POLARIS? ICEMAN? YOU READY?
READY WHEN YOU ARE, WARREN.
PLEASE, POLARIS. NOT "WARREN." IN A FIGHT...
...I PREFER... ARCH-ANGEL!
THEY'RE CUTTING US TO PIECES! FALL BACK!

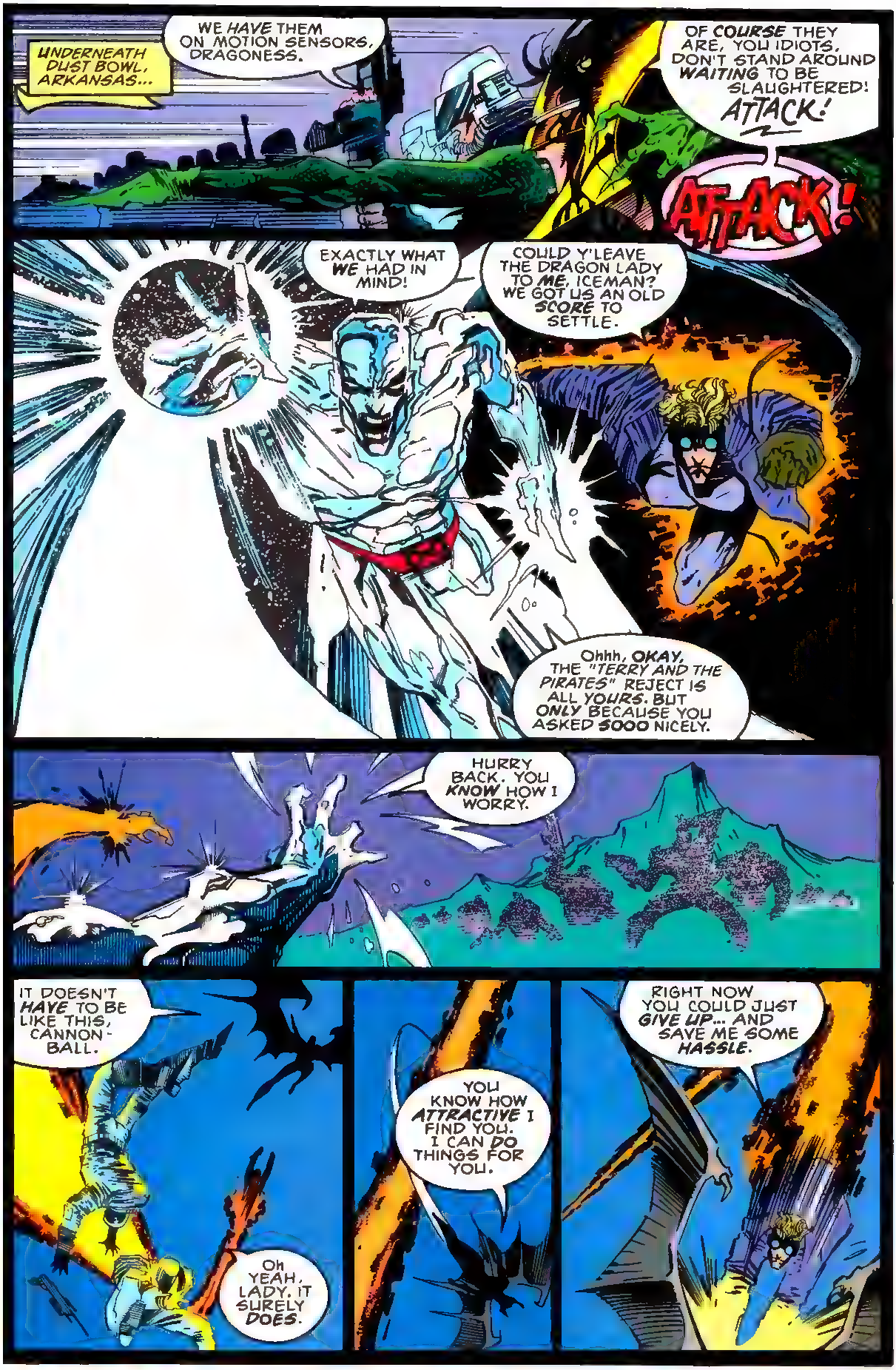
FALL BACK?!
WHICH WAY?!
THEY'RE COMING OUTTA THE WOOD-WORK!
ROGUE, GAMBIT AND PSYLOCKE ARE ATTACKIN' FROM THE EAST...
...AND BOOM BOOM AND QUICKSILVER ARE COMIN' FROM THE NORTH!
THERE'S NOWHERE T'GO!
THEY KNOW ALL OF US ON SIGHT! DON'T NEED MUCH MORE PROOF THAN THAT THAT WE'VE GOT THE MLF STRONG-HOLD, ALL RIGHT.
BUT THESE ARE "GRUNTS," HAVOK. WE NEED TO UNEARTH THE MAIN PLAYERS.
I THINK "UNEARTH" MIGHT BE RIGHT ON THE MONEY, STORM.
LET'S SEE WHAT A PLASMA BLAST UP THE MAIN STREET TURNS UP...
...BINGO.
THE WHOLE TOWN'S A DUCK BLIND, COVERING THE REAL ACTION UNDER-GROUND.
LET'S GET DOWN, PEOPLE!


ONE OF CABLE'S SAFE-HOUSES, IN SWITZERLAND.
THEN AGAIN, WITH ONE SUCH AS APOCALYPSE INVOLVED... WHAT HOUSE IS TRULY SAFE?
THIS TECHNOLOGY... WHICH PERVADES EVERY CORNER OF CABLE'S LITTLE HIDEY-HOLE...
DERIVED FROM ME! FROM MY TECHNOLOGY: MY WORK!
IT'S UNMISTAKABLE! BUT FROM WHERE WOULD CABLE HAVE GARNERED SUCH KNOWLEDGE?
THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO COULD POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN FAMILIAR ENOUGH WITH THE WORKINGS OF MY FORMER SHIP ARE THE MEMBERS OF X-FACTOR...
...CYCLOPS AND HIS ILK.
NONE OF THEM WOULD CO-OPERATE WITH CABLE.
COULD ONE OF THEM ACTUALLY... BE CABLE?
BUT THAT'S RIDICULOUS. HOW COULD A MEMBER OF X-FACTOR BE CABLE? FOR THAT MATTER, WHY WOULD HE CHOOSE TO...
OF COURSE.
WHAT IF... THERE WAS NO CHOICE?

DEPARTMENT K...
NICE TRY, CABLE. BOTTOM LINE IS...
...YOU MOVE TOO SLOW!
AND YOU TALK TOO MUCH.
RACHT
SO I'LL MOVE FASTER...
...YOU'LL TALK LESS...
...THEN WE'LL ALL BE HAPPY.
OOOFF


WOLVERINE! ARE YOU INJURED?
NOTHING THAT NAILING THAT JOKER WOULDN'T CURE.
I WOULD NOT WISH TO INSULT YOU BY ATTACKING HIM, IF YOU WISH TO HANDLE HIM ALONE.
OF ALL THE WAYS YOU COULD INSULT ME, LENDING A HAND AIN'T ONE OF 'EM!
BEAUTIFUL. THE ARMORY.
A CORNUCOPIA OF MAYHEM.
CABLE! THERE IS NOWHERE FOR YOU TO GO!
WHY SHOULD I GO ANYWHERE, KID? I LIKE IT HERE!
ZZKOW

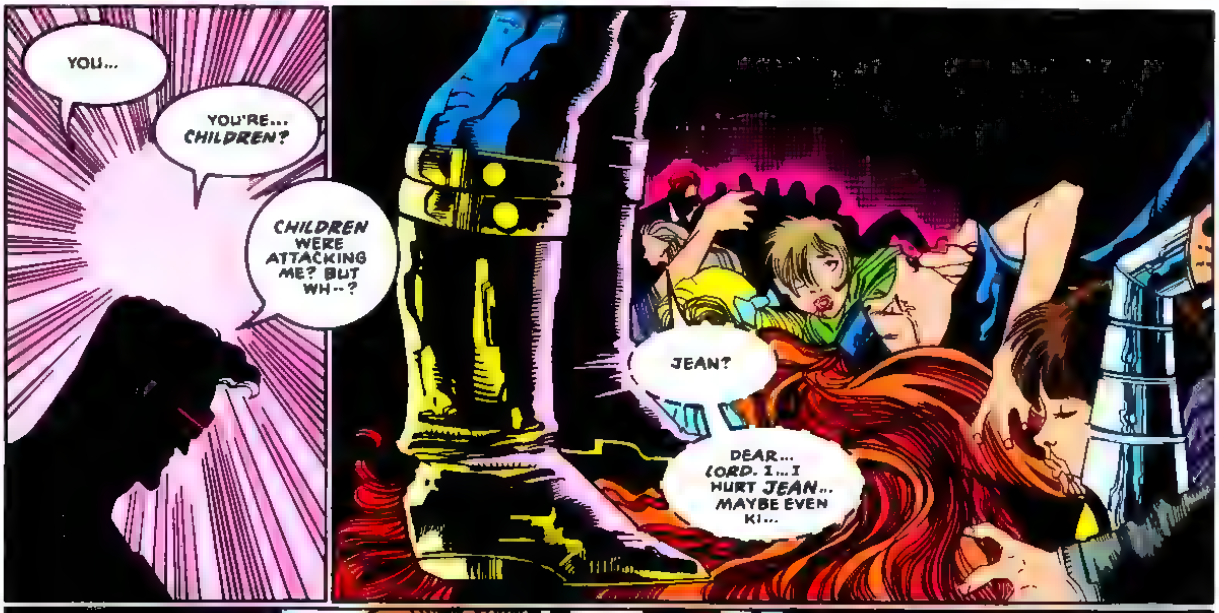

I AM NOT "KID." I AM BISHOP.
AND IF YOU KNEW ANYTHING OF ME, THEN YOU WOULD KNOW THAT SHOOTING ME WITH AN ENERGY WEAPON...
... IS THE LAST THING YOU WOULD WANT TO DO.
BATHOOM
POINT... TAKEN.

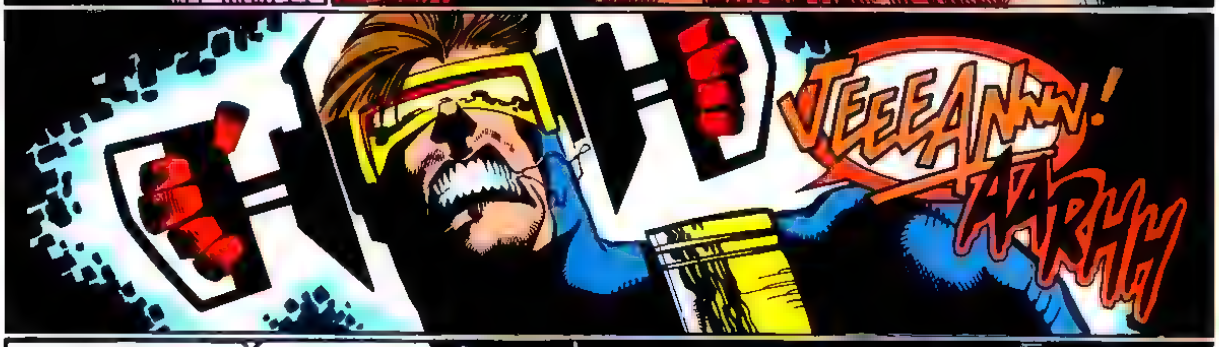

UNDERNEATH DUST BOWL, ARKANSAS...
WE HAVE THEM ON MOTION SENSORS, DRAGONESS.
OF COURSE THEY ARE, YOU IDIOTS, DON'T STAND AROUND WAITING TO BE SLAUGHTERED! ATTACK!
ATTACK!
EXACTLY WHAT WE HAD IN MIND!
COULD Y'LEAVE THE DRAGON LADY TO ME, ICEMAN? WE GOT US AN OLD SCORE TO SETTLE.
Ohhh, OKAY, THE "TERRY AND THE PIRATES" REJECT IS ALL YOURS. BUT ONLY BECAUSE YOU ASKED SOOO NICELY.
HURRY BACK. YOU KNOW HOW I WORRY.
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS, CANNON-BALL.
OH YEAH, LADY. IT SURELY DOES.
YOU KNOW HOW ATTRACTIVE I FIND YOU. I CAN DO THINGS FOR YOU.
RIGHT NOW YOU COULD JUST GIVE UP... AND SAVE ME SOME HASSLE.

BAD MOVE, CANNONBALL. YOU GOT CLOSE ENOUGH FOR ME TO SLOW YOU DOWN...
THAT MAKES YOU VULNERABLE TO MY STINGERS.
SORRY, BOY. IT COULD HAVE BEEN FUN FOR THE TWO OF US.
BUT THINK OF THE FAR GREATER FUN AWAITING THE THREE OF US.
CANNON-BALL'S PROBLEM IS THAT, NO MATTER HOW MUCH HE TRIES, HE STILL GETS ALL GOOSHY WHEN IT COMES TA FIGHTIN' "WOMEN FOLK."
ODDLY ENOUGH, WE DON'T HAVE THAT DILEMMA.
WHOA... GONNA TAKE ...A FEW MINUTES...
T'SHAKE OFF THAT...
FFF

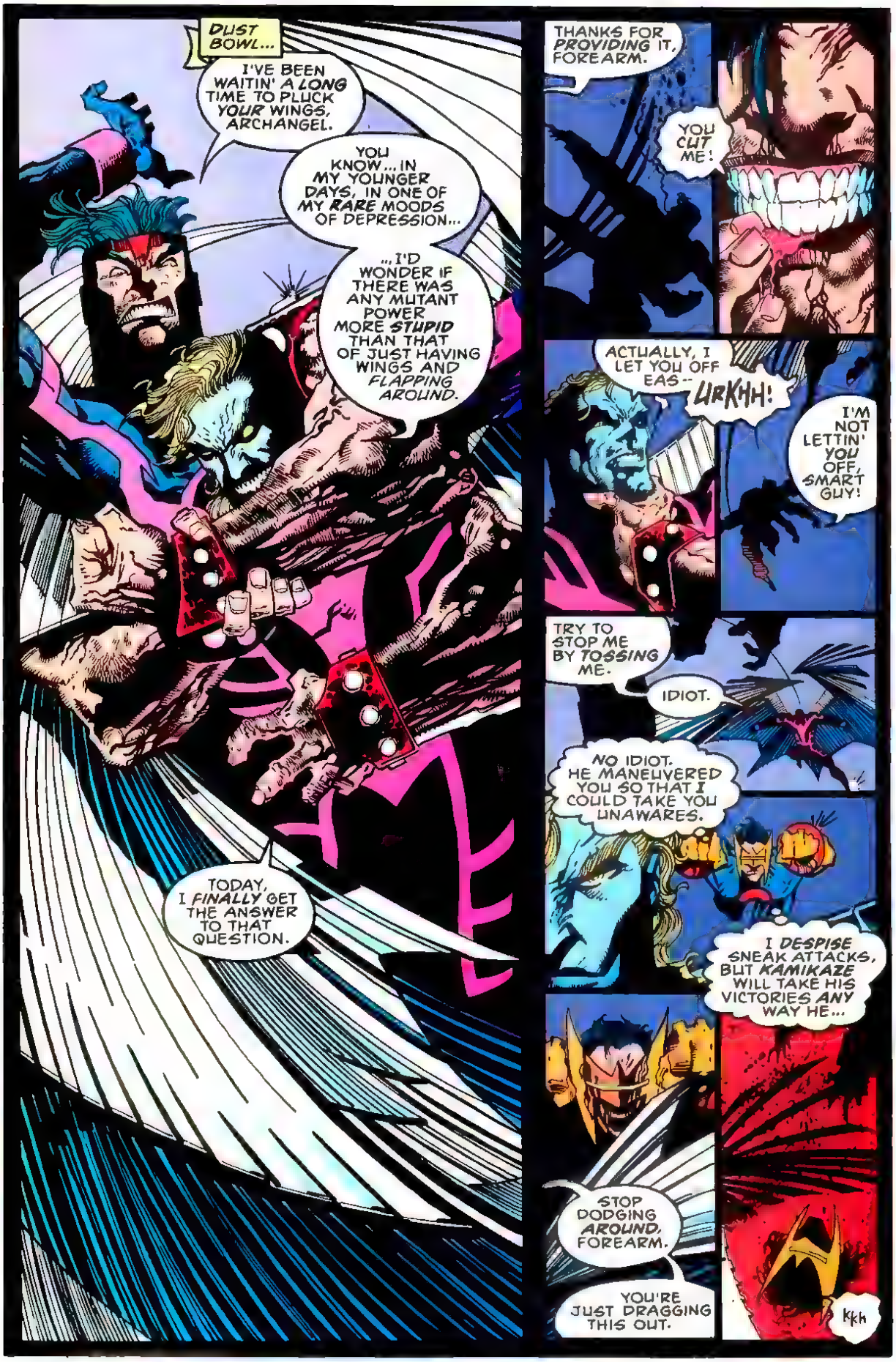
Ohhhh
NOOOOTTTT
AAAAGGGAAIINN...
IT'S TAKING EVERY-THING I'VE GOT TO SLOW HIM TO TEN MILES PER HOUR! QUICK! TAKE HIM!
WE GOT HIM, TEMPO!
NON. YOU DO NOT. BECAUSE IT'S NOT IN THE CARDS...
OR THE PSI-BLADE.
ARRHHH
FEYAAH
NO NEED FOR THE "THANK YOUS," QUICKSILVER.
THAT'S CORRECT, GAMBIT. NO NEED, BECAUSE I COULD HAVE HANDLED THEM WITHOUT YOU AND PSYLOCKE'S HELP.
IF GETTING KILLED FITS YOUR DEFINITION OF HANDLING THEM, THEN I'D HAVE TO AGREE.

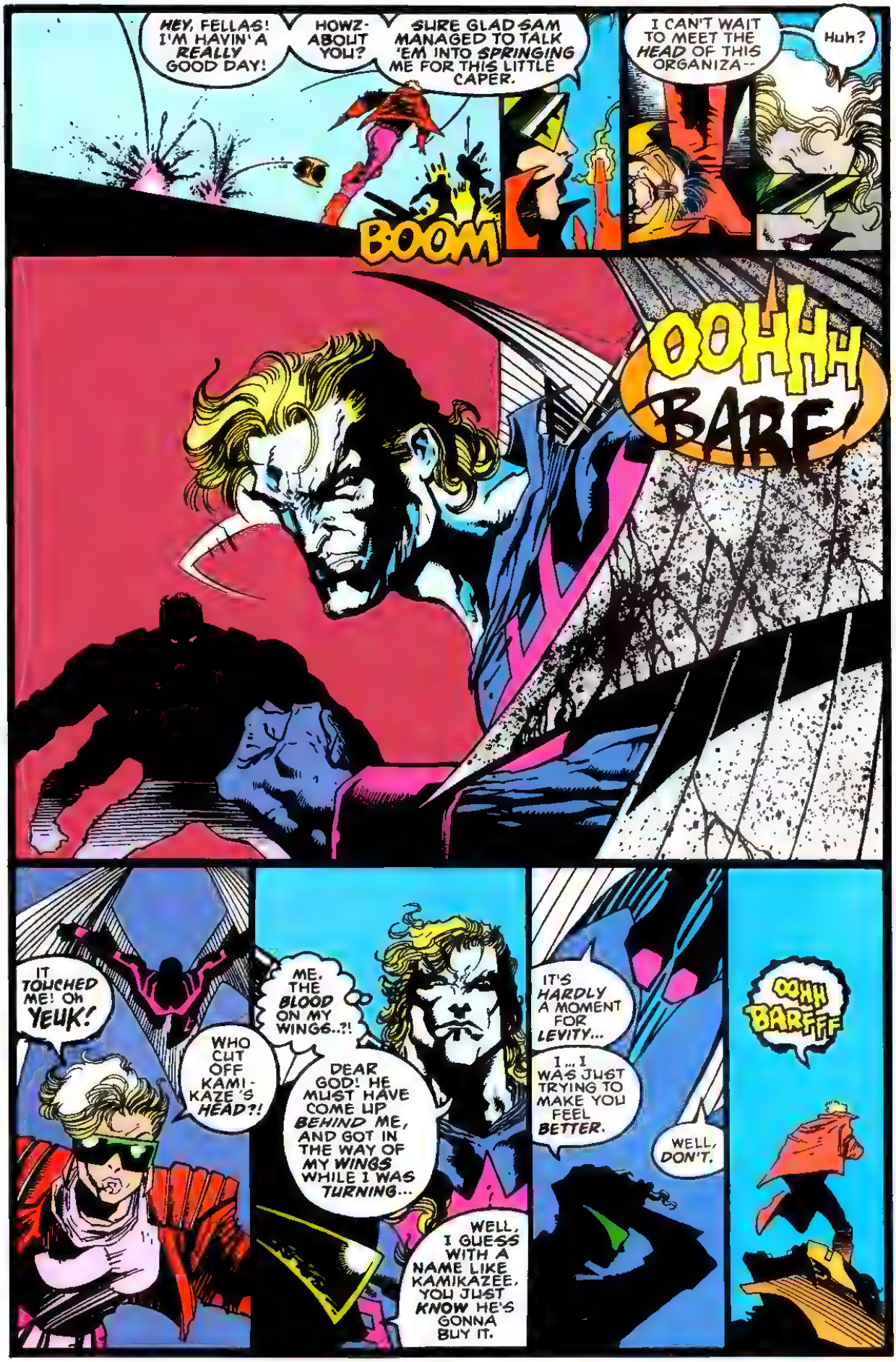
ELSEWHERE...
ALL RIGHT! COME ON! TAKE YOUR SHOT!
YOU THINK LEAVING ME IN DARKNESS FOR HOURS IS GOING TO BOTHER ME? OR EVEN SLOW ME DOWN?
I HEAR YOU, SCUTTLING AROUND, LIKE THE RATS YOU ARE!
COME ON, THEN! I'M READY!
MORE THAN READY!
I'LL TAKE YOU ALL DOWN, EVEN IF I HAVE TO LEVEL THIS PLACE! I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU! JEAN'S NOT AFRAID OF YOU!
THE ONLY ONES STINKING OF FEAR IN HERE ARE YOU!
YOU!

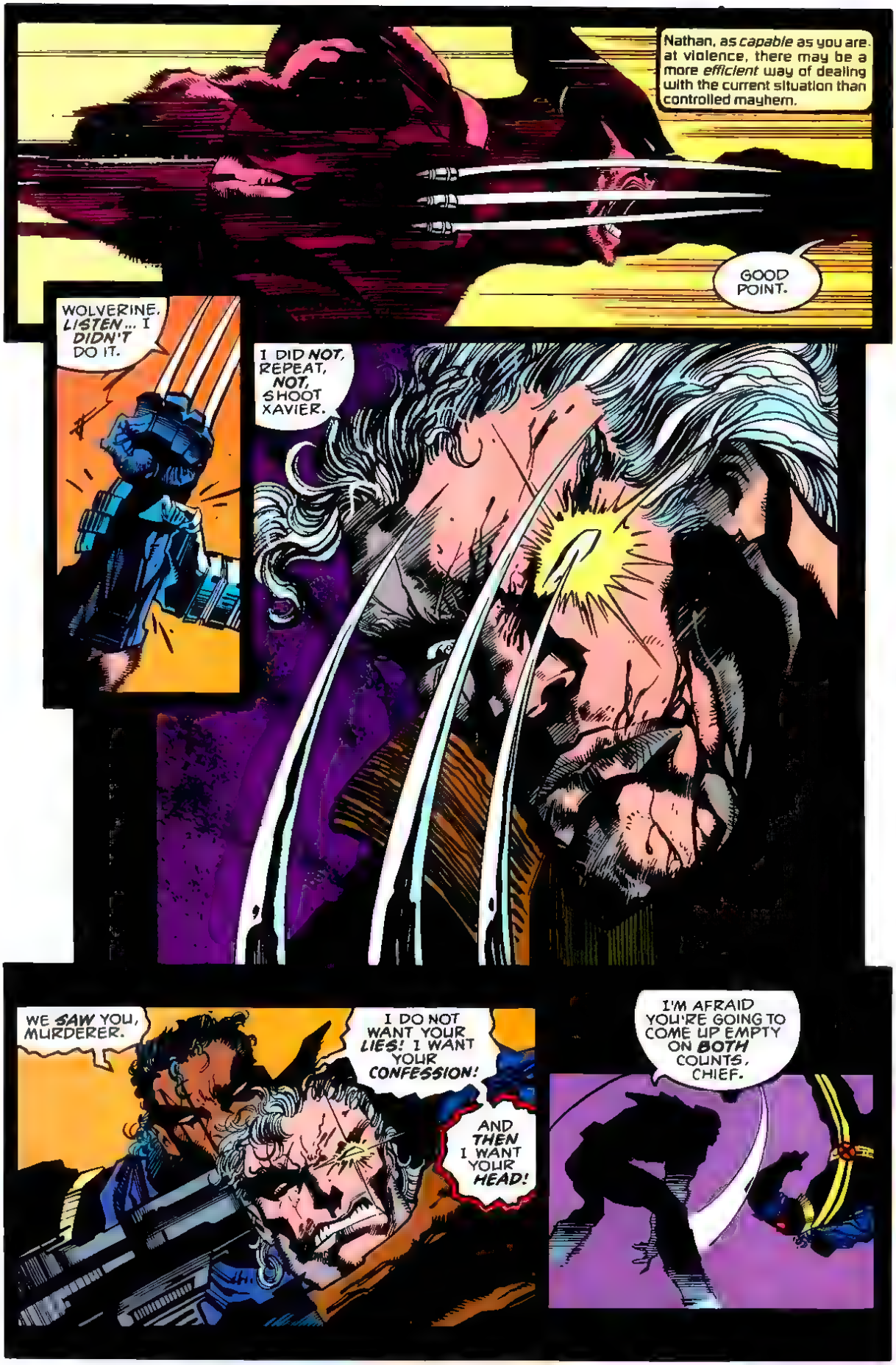

YOU...
YOU'RE... CHILDREN?
CHILDREN WERE ATTACKING ME? BUT WH--?
JEAN?
DEAR... LORD. I...I HURT JEAN... MAYBE EVEN KI...


JEEEANNN!
AARGH

YOU'RE A BORN LEADER, CYCLOPS. SOMEONE WHO ALWAYS BELIEVES HE KNOWS JUST WHAT TO DO.
BUT SOMETIMES YOU'RE OPERATING COMPLETELY IN THE DARK.
AND SOMETIMES, AS YOU DO THESE THINGS, YOU WIND UP INJURING THE ONES YOU LOVE.
DOES THAT MATTER TO YOU AT ALL?
NO. NO, SOMEHOW, I DOUBT THAT IT DOES.


DUST BOWL...
I'VE BEEN WAITIN' A LONG TIME TO PLUCK YOUR WINGS, ARCHANGEL.
YOU KNOW... IN MY YOUNGER DAYS, IN ONE OF MY RARE MOODS OF DEPRESSION...
...I'D WONDER IF THERE WAS ANY MUTANT POWER MORE STUPID THAN THAT OF JUST HAVING WINGS AND FLAPPING AROUND.
TODAY, I FINALLY GET THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.
THANKS FOR PROVIDING IT, FOREARM.
YOU CUT ME!
ACTUALLY, I LET YOU OFF EAS--
URKHH!
I'M NOT LETTIN' YOU OFF, SMART GUY!
TRY TO STOP ME BY TOSSING ME.
IDIOT.
NO IDIOT. HE MANEUVERED YOU SO THAT I COULD TAKE YOU UNAWARES.
I DESPISE SNEAK ATTACKS, BUT KAMIKAZE WILL TAKE HIS VICTORIES ANY WAY HE...
STOP DODGING AROUND, FOREARM.
YOU'RE JUST DRAGGING THIS OUT.
Kkh


HEY, FELLAS! I'M HAVIN' A REALLY GOOD DAY!
HOWZ-ABOUT YOU?
SURE GLAD SAM MANAGED TO TALK 'EM INTO SPRINGING ME FOR THIS LITTLE CAPER.
BOOM
I CAN'T WAIT TO MEET THE HEAD OF THIS ORGANIZA--
Huh?
OOHHH BARF
IT TOUCHED ME! Oh YEUK!
WHO CUT OFF KAMI-KAZE'S HEAD?!
ME. THE BLOOD ON MY WINGS..?!
DEAR GOD! HE MUST HAVE COME UP BEHIND ME, AND GOT IN THE WAY OF MY WINGS WHILE I WAS TURNING...
WELL, I GUESS WITH A NAME LIKE KAMIKAZEE, YOU JUST KNOW HE'S GONNA BUY IT.
IT'S HARDLY A MOMENT FOR LEVITY...
I... I WAS JUST TRYING TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.
WELL, DON'T.
OOHH BARFFF


Nathan, as *capable* as you are at violence, there may be a more *efficient* way of dealing with the current situation than controlled mayhem.
GOOD POINT.
WOLVERINE, *LISTEN*... I *DIDN'T* DO IT.
I DID *NOT*, REPEAT, *NOT*, SHOOT XAVIER.
WE *SAW* YOU, MURDERER.
I DO NOT WANT YOUR *LIES!* I WANT YOUR *CONFESSION!*
AND *THEN* I WANT YOUR *HEAD!*
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GOING TO COME UP EMPTY ON *BOTH* COUNTS, CHIEF.

BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

You know the way our Chinese friends celebrate different years like "The Year of the Pig," or "The Year of the Dragon"? Well, for mighty Marvel, 1992 has most definitely been "The Year of the Spider," and what a great year it's been! Spider-Man's thirtieth anniversary has kept our whole blushing bullpen busy with special Hologram-Cover Issues, Spidey Conventions, Web-Slinger Parties and all sorts of arachnid-inspired fun 'n games!

Another, more subtle way that we've been celebrating everyone's favorite wall-crawler has been by introducing famous Marvel guest stars in Spidey's syndicated newspaper strip. Those of you who are lucky enough to have Spidey's daily strip in your local newspaper's comic section, have already seen the current episode which is just now zooming to a cataclysmic conclusion, the one featuring the ever dazzling and delightful Dr. Strange!

Well, here's a really sensational follow-up to the Spidey/Dr. Strange adventure. Starting sometime in October, the peripatetic Peter Parker will welcome another guest star to what is arguably the most popular newspaper story-strip in all the world — Daredevil, the Man Without Fear! This will be Matt Murdock's first appearance in any newspaper and I can promise you it'll be a zingeroo! Can't tell you much without spoiling the surprises for you — but I can clue you in about some new artists coming on board!

Floro Dery, who has so brilliantly illustrated the Spidey Sunday pages for the past decade or so, has been forced to give up his chores because of an increased work load at the animation studio which is his home base. Although I was genuinely sorry to bid Floro adieu, wait'll you hear who his exciting replacements will be!

To pencil Spidey's Sunday pages, we were lucky to grab Rampagin' **Ron Frenz**, the demon illustrator who, together with the scripting of Titanic **Tom DeFalco**, has made MIGHTY THOR one of Marvel's most consistent "must read" titles issue after issue! And, to ink Ron's awesome panels, we managed to lure one of Marvel's all-time greats out of semi-retirement — which means that the world once again will thrill to the exotic embellishments of the titanically talented Joltin' **Joe Sinnott**!

So, Ron and Joe now join forces with comicdom's own legendary **Larry Lieber**, who has been so pandemoniously penciling and inking Spidey's daily pages for lo these many years, to form the most spectacular art team on any newspaper page! It's all yours, for free, in your local newspaper! (And if your paper is one of the few that doesn't carry **The Amazing Spider-Man**, never underestimate the power of a letter to the editor!)

Now, until Spidey's next anniversary — Larry, Ron, Joe, and I urge thee most humbly — Keep Thy Webs Untangled!

Excelsior!

Stan

Stan Lee

When we think of October, we think of those scary people who put on masks, play tricks, and try to frighten everyone. That's right, we're talking about *politicians*! This is the time of year when politicos are plentiful, frightening even Red Ghosts, Scarlet Witches, and Hobgoblins! As every Marveloid knows, we're just weeks away from the funniest holiday of the year — **Election Day!**

In his very first appearance, the Amazing Spider-Man learned that with great power must come great responsibility. Well, every Marveloid out there over the age of 18 has great power, too — the power to *vote*! This is a responsibility many of us take for granted if at all. Think about it — we actually have the opportunity to help decide who will hold the most important position in the nation! Why not exercise some of your great responsibility that comes with the great power to vote? To register, call your municipal government office or the local chapter of the League of Woman Voters.

From the presidential race we move on to a footrace, as we track Marvel's standings in the 1992 Corporate Challenge. The Corporate Challenge is a series of 3 1/2-mile races held every June, in which companies all over New York compete to see who has the fastest workaholics. The big winner for Marvel this year was **Danny** "Speedy" **Gonzalez**, who finished one of the races in just 21 minutes. Other Marvel Quicksilvers were **Bernadette Ayala** of the Manufacturing Department, **Mary Sprowls** of the Finance Department, and editors **Don** (PUNISHER) **Daley** and **Glenn** (NOMAD) **Herdling**. The *apres*-race parties held at the Senior Exec Ed's place were also a runaway success!

The Marvel softball season is also racing to a close as we write this. We all must have had our catcher's masks on in June (not to mention our hitter's masks and our outfielder's masks), because we had a three-game winning streak, including a victory over *Billboard* magazine — a team which we had never before beaten in Marvel history! We wore the masks of tragedy, however, as DC trick-or-treated us to a loss in our second game against their squadron of all-stars. The DC/Marvel retro-rivalry is now tied at one game apiece, with one more left to play between the two companies.

One thing is for sure — the ultra-athletic DC team sure knows how to get the most out of a bat! (Maybe it would help our chances if we all wore Adam West masks!)

Bullpen neo-cartoonist **Rick Parker** and assistant editor **Barry Dutter** have good reason to throw a masquerade party this month! Ricko the Sicko and "Big" Barry have a hyper-funny book of cartoons coming out. The book is called *Everything I Really Need to Know I Learned from Television*, and is on sale in bookstores all across America. (By a strange coincidence, that same creative team is also responsible for the cartoon that appears each month on this very page!) It's the perfect reading material for All Hallow's Eve! It will help you laugh away all your fears!

If you *really* want to treat your neighborhood monsters, don't give them candy this Halloween — give them the all-new Marvel Masterpiece trading cards! This 100 card set features all your favorite heroes and villains, beautifully painted by Joe Jusko. Each card is a true work of art! And if your preference is for pictures that *move*, we'd also like to mention that the Marvel Video Cassette *Pryde of the X-Men* is now available at video retailers everywhere. Get a copy now and receive a $5 refund on other videos in MCV's catalog. No tricks here — just plenty of treats for everyone!

Till next time, remember, though Halloween comes but once a year, Marvel heroes wear masks and colorful costumes all year long! See you at the polls!

THE BULL'S EYE

by Rick Parker & Barry Dutter

ACCENTS BIODIVERSITY ESCAPE CLAUSES OLYMPIC BULLPEN BORDERLINE BLATHER TRIPLECASTS FASHION STATEMENTS QUALITY-OF-LIFE

NOW YOU'RE SAYING IT WAS A FRAME-UP? IS *THAT* WHAT YOU WANT US TO BELIEVE?

THAT WOULD BE *NICE*, YES. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A BIG SUPPORTER OF THE *TRUTH*.

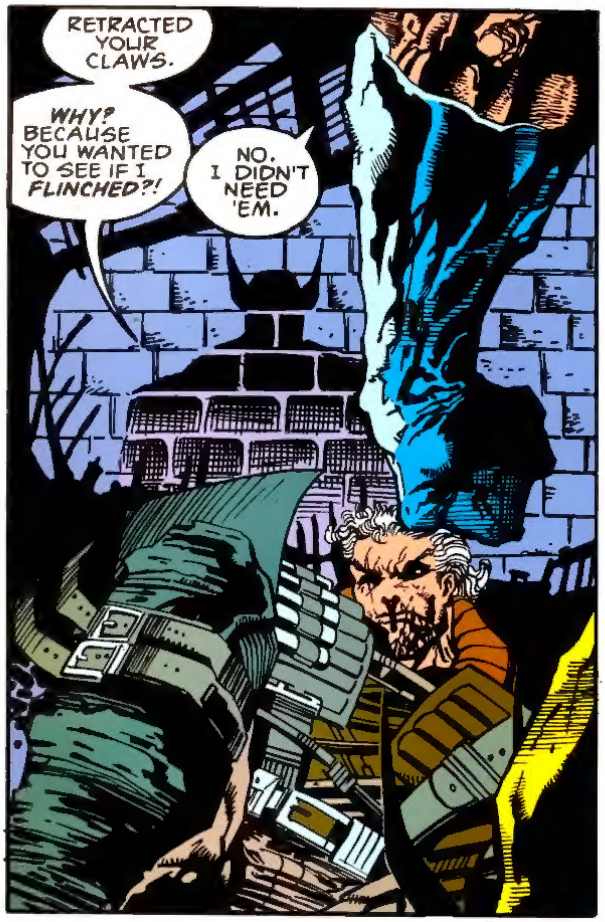
BUT IF YOU *DON'T* BELIEVE ME... THEN GO AHEAD.

STRIKE.

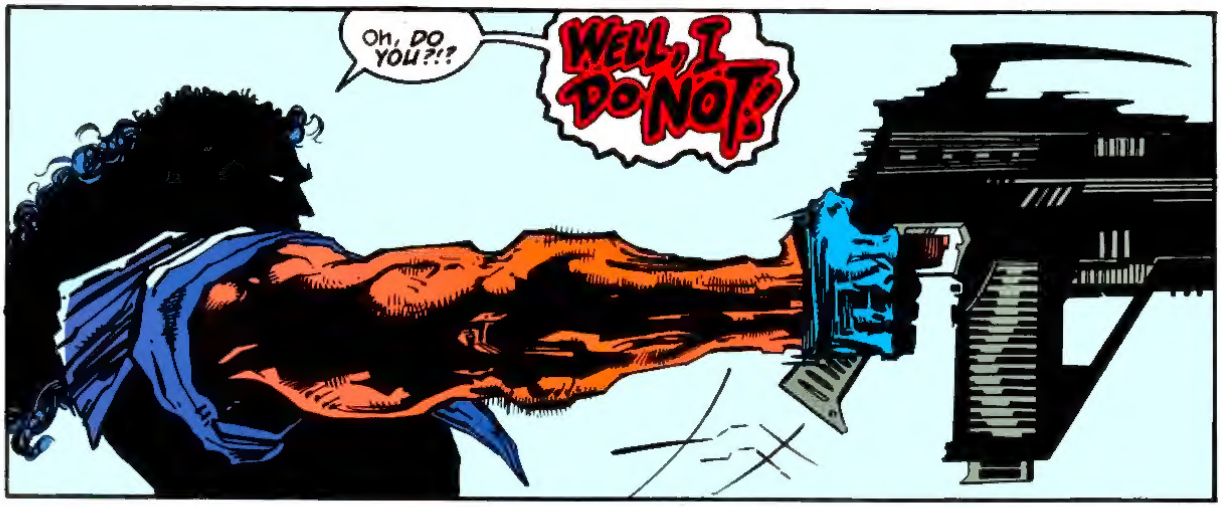
COME ON. IF YOU'RE THAT *SURE* OF YOURSELF, THEN STOP ME *ONCE* AND FOR *ALL*. MIGHT BE YOUR ONLY CHANCE.

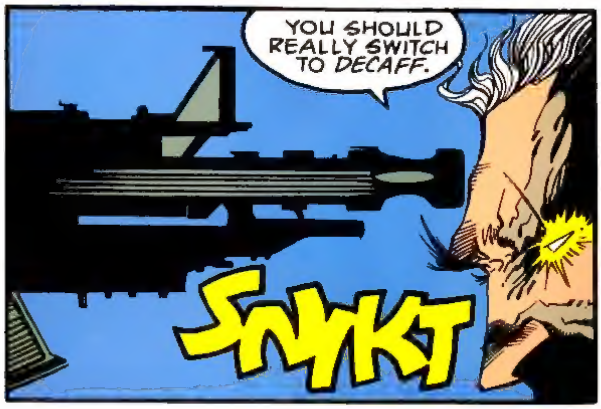
JUST KEEP IN MIND THAT IF I'M TELLING THE *TRUTH*, THEN SOMEONE'S PLAYING YOU FOR A *FOOL*.

IT'S YOUR *CALL* AS TO WHETHER THE NAME *FITS*.


RETRACTED YOUR CLAWS.
WHY? BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO SEE IF I FLINCHED?!
NO. I DIDN'T NEED 'EM.

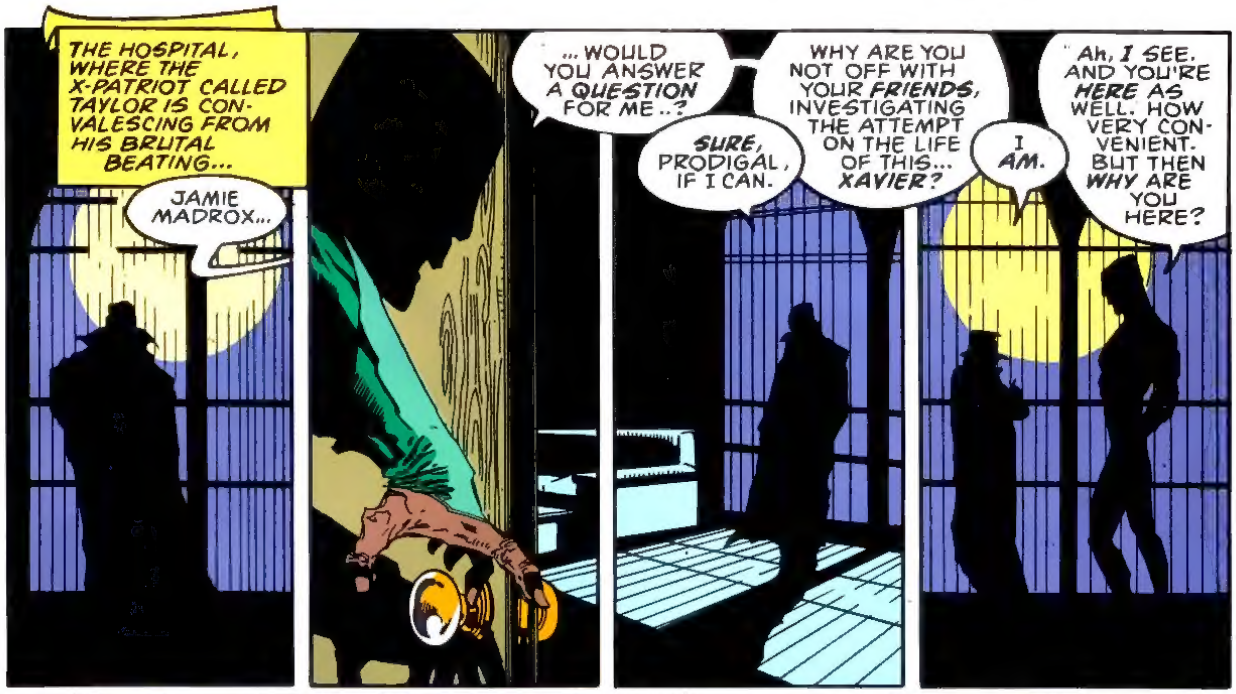
WAIT A MINUTE YOUR OWN EYES TOLD YOU WHAT HE DID!
ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU BELIEVE HIM WHEN HE ASKS YOU TO IGNORE WHAT YOU YOURSELF HAVE SEEN?
I CAN'T BE ONE HUNDRED PER CENT SURE HE'S LYING. BUT I HAVE TO BE ONE HUNDRED PER CENT SURE, BECAUSE IF I KILL HIM, THEN HE'S ONE HUNDRED PER CENT DEAD.
'GOTTA GIVE HIM THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT... FOR NOW.


OH, DO YOU?!?
WELL, I DO NOT!

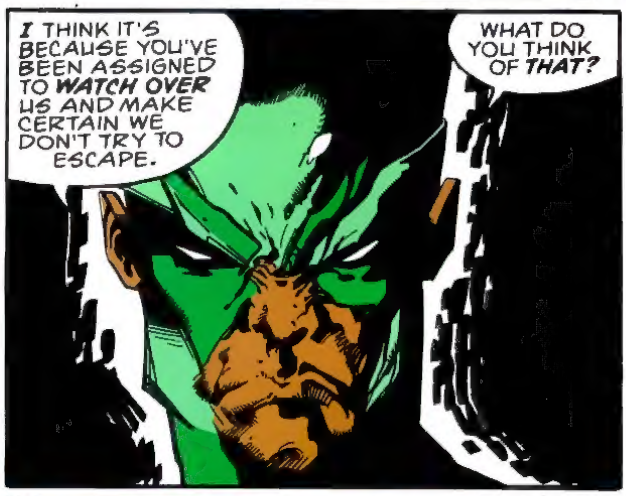

YOU SHOULD REALLY SWITCH TO DECAFF.
SNIKT

LISTEN TO THE MAN, BISH. IT COULDN'T HURT.

NOW, ONCE YOU'VE CALMED DOWN, BISHOP...
...GO TAKE ANOTHER GUN OFF THE RACK AND LET'S GET THIS SORTED OUT.


THE HOSPITAL, WHERE THE X-PATRIOT CALLED TAYLOR IS CONVALESCING FROM HIS BRUTAL BEATING...
JAMIE MADROX...
... WOULD YOU ANSWER A QUESTION FOR ME..?
SURE, PRODIGAL, IF I CAN.
WHY ARE YOU NOT OFF WITH YOUR FRIENDS, INVESTIGATING THE ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF THIS... XAVIER?
I AM.
Ah, I SEE. AND YOU'RE HERE AS WELL. HOW VERY CONVENIENT. BUT THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?

IN CASE SOMEONE TRIES TO ATTACK TAYLOR AGAIN.
I DO NOT THINK THAT'S THE REASON. YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK?


I THINK IT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN ASSIGNED TO WATCH OVER US AND MAKE CERTAIN WE DON'T TRY TO ESCAPE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?

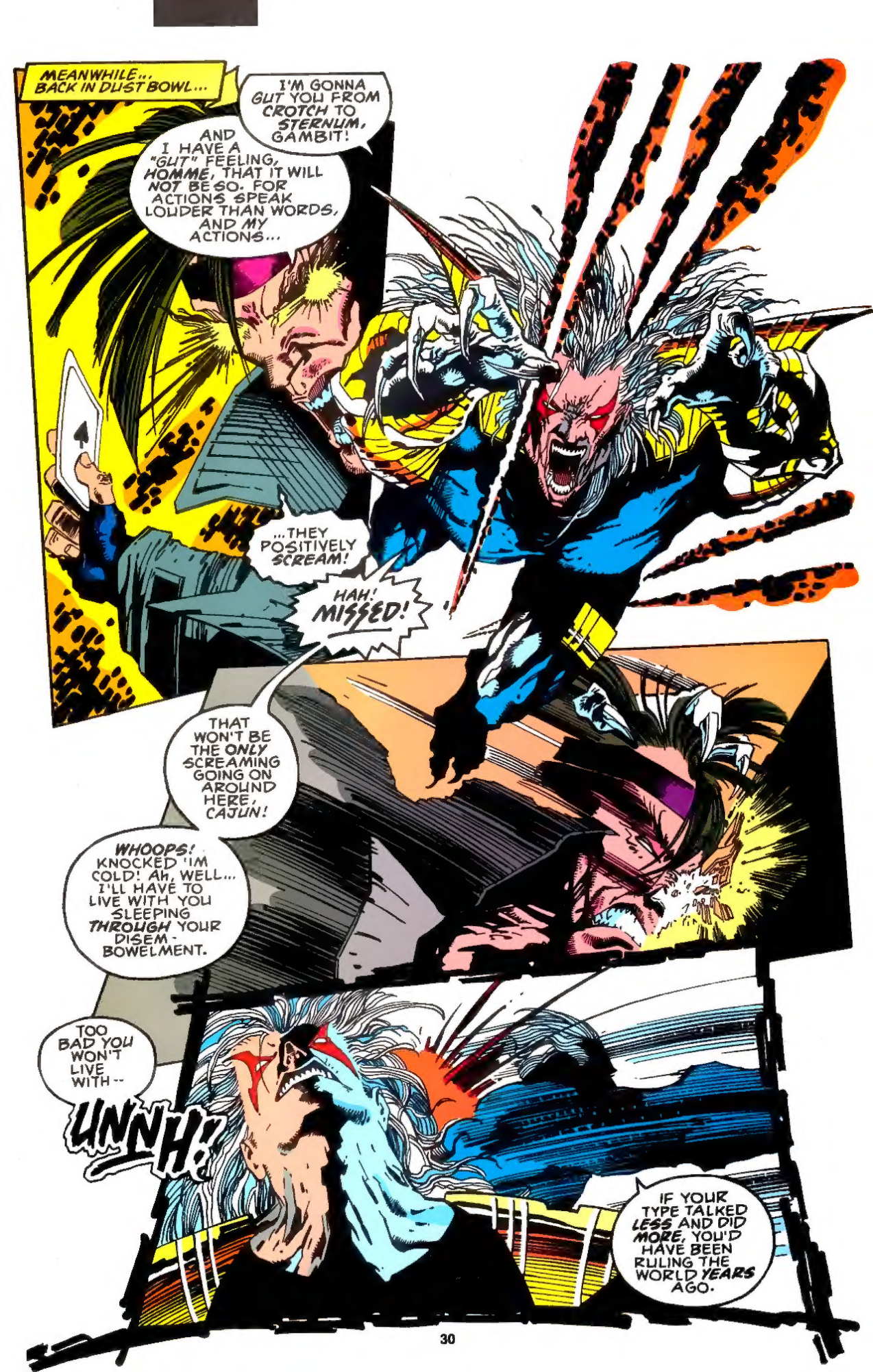
WELL, TO BE HONEST, I DON'T--

MMMFFF!

THEY REALLY SHOULD KEEP THEIR CHLOROFORM LOCKED UP BETTER THAN THAT.
NO TELLING WHOSE HANDS IT MIGHT FALL INTO.

NOW WHAT?

NOW, LLIKAS, WE CHECK OUT.


MEANWHILE... BACK IN DUST BOWL...
I'M GONNA GUT YOU FROM CROTCH TO STERNUM, GAMBIT!
AND I HAVE A "GUT" FEELING, HOMME, THAT IT WILL NOT BE SO. FOR ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS, AND MY ACTIONS...
...THEY POSITIVELY SCREAM!
HAH! MISSED!
THAT WON'T BE THE ONLY SCREAMING GOING ON AROUND HERE, CAJUN!
WHOOPS! KNOCKED 'IM COLD! Ah, WELL... I'LL HAVE TO LIVE WITH YOU SLEEPING THROUGH YOUR DISEM-BOWELMENT.
TOO BAD YOU WON'T LIVE WITH--
UNNH!
IF YOUR TYPE TALKED LESS AND DID MORE, YOU'D HAVE BEEN RULING THE WORLD YEARS AGO.

STILL, I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL. AFTER ALL...
...IT GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO EVEN THE SCORE WITH GAMBIT AND AVOID HIS SMIRKING--
AAGHH
YEAH, IT WAS REAL NICE YOU HELPED GAMBIT.
TOO BAD NOBODY'S AROUND TO HELP YOU!
BE SURE TO PICK UP OUR NEXT CHAPTER
IN
X-MEN #15
SO THAT YOU CAN FIND OUT IF
REAPER KILLS GAMBIT & QUICKSILVER!
AS THE X-CUTIONER'S SONG CONTINUES!